2003 COASTAL AMERICA AWARDS PROGRAM NOMINEES

NERIT – Bill Hubbard responded, no Sagamore

- **Save the Bay's Narragansett Bay Eelgrass Restoration Team, Narragansett Bay, RI**

This project not only focuses on restoration of eelgrass to Narragansett Bay, but also on testing and advancing the science of eelgrass restoration for use in other estuaries. Over 25 eelgrass transplants have been completed throughout Narragansett Bay. The team is now in the final stages of developing an Eelgrass Restoration Plan for Narragansett Bay using a Geographic Information System (GIS) site selection model approach developed by the University of New Hampshire. Performance of the test transplants and subsequent monitoring are incorporated into a final model output of full-scale eelgrass restoration potential. Using results from this model, the team has identified suitable sites in Narragansett Bay for full-scale transplants, to be completed in May and June of this year. These transplants will be monitored closely to further advance the understanding of eelgrass transplant science.

Significant Achievements:

- Development of an Eelgrass Restoration Plan for Narragansett Bay
- Completion of 19 test eelgrass transplants
- Identification of sites and coordination of efforts for full-scale transplants
- Planned monitoring for further understanding of eelgrass transplant science

Team members: **Save the Bay**; Newport Dive Center; National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; University of Rhode Island; Rhode Island Aquafund; Onset Computer Corporation; Restore America's Estuaries; RI Department of Environmental Management; Ocean State Fisherman's Association; University of New Hampshire – Jackson Estuarine Laboratory; Ocean State Marine Restoration Consulting

MARIT

- **Maryland Coastal Bays Program – Community Visioning Team (2001 resubmission)**

The Maryland Coastal Bays Program developed a "visioning" process to look at zoning and other land use planning issues in the region. As part of this process, the partners conducted evening lectures, sponsored workshops, and facilitated "visioning" sessions in an effort to engage as many residents as possible in determining the future landscape of their communities. The workshops showed that residents from all walks of life have consistent visions for their community, which includes protection of natural resources. The Coastal Bays program has used results to convince policy makers their land use decisions harbor intricate financial and social links.

Significant Achievements:

- Incorporation of results into the East Coast Estuary Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plans
- Stimulation of the creation of Worcester 2000 (a long-range comprehensive land use revision)
- Curbing of the level of strip development along the area's major thoroughfares
- Stimulation of a land planning and development speaker series

Team Members: **MD Coastal Bays Program**; MD Office of Planning; MD Mass Transit Administration; US Environmental Protection Agency; Worcester County Commissioners; Town of Berlin; Town of Ocean City; MD Department of Natural Resources; Mystic Harbor Association

- **Poplar Island Restoration Team, Chesapeake Bay, MD (2001 resubmission)**

This project involves the use of dredged material from Baltimore Harbor approach channels to rebuild Poplar Island to its approximate 1847 configuration (approx. 1,100 acres). Dikes will be used to protect the facility from the severe wave activity that is common in that region of the Chesapeake Bay (and the reason for original island erosion and splitting into four separate islands). These islands currently only total five acres. When finished, the island will

consist of approximately 555 acres each of upland and wetland habitat. This new habitat is expected to attract colonial water birds and to become an aquatic breeding ground for blue crabs and striped bass, as well as a site for recreational boating.

Significant Achievements (to date):

- Construction of both Phase I (~ 640 acres) and Phase II (~ 500 acres) perimeter dikes
- Placement of both the first and second inflow of dredged materials on the structure
- Planting of initial wetlands (*Spartina alterniflora* and *S. patens*) on a 1-acre area near Coaches Is. and a 3-acre developmental cell, which includes SAV, wetland, and upland grasses, shrubs, and trees

Team Members: **US Army Corps of Engineers**, MD Port Administration, MD Department of Transportation

SERIT

GMRIT

- **East Pass Re-opening Restoration Project Team, St. Andrews Bay/Bay County, FL**

This project entailed the re-opening of the East Pass, the historical inlet to St. Andrews Bay in Bay County, FL. In 1934 the US Army Corps of Engineers opened a western pass into the bay, which lead to the natural, eventual closure of the East Pass in 1998 and creation of a seven-mile long, poorly flushed, dead end lagoon. Water quality declined resulting in a pronounced deterioration of the fisheries in the lagoon. The land bridge between Tyndall Air Force Base and Shell Island, created by the sand deposition, threatened a population of endangered beach mice, as well as nesting threatened and endangered sea turtles and shore birds, by exposing these species to mainland predators. Bay County and Tyndall Air Force Base applied for a joint Coastal Permit to re-open the East Pass. Completion of the project aids the area's beach habitat restoration/preservation, loggerhead sea turtle protection, and Shell Island dune habitat restoration.

Significant Achievements:

- Creation of a channel 3,600 feet in length connecting the St. Andrews Bay to the Gulf of Mexico, with a cross-sectional area of 3,500 ft², and a maximum channel depth of –10 feet NGVD
- Use of dredged spoils to form dunes on the east and west sides of the cut
- Stabilization of dunes by the planting of over 200,000 sea oat seedlings (Students from Rutherford High School, Bay County School District, will plant the remaining 40,000 seedlings in June of 2002.)

Team Members: **Tyndall Air Force Base**; Bay County; Coastal Technology Corporation; US Army Corps of Engineers; US Fish and Wildlife Service; Bay Defense Alliance; Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission; FL Park Service; National Marine Fisheries Service; FL Department of Environmental Protection

- **Federal Emergency Management Agency-National Estuary Program Collaboration Team, Gulf of Mexico**

The Team Leader initiated the project by presenting an unsolicited proposal to the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program (BTNEP), the Gulf of Mexico Program (GOMP), and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The scope and general format for a workshop were set, and the BTNEP and GOMP contacted the eight NEPs bordering the Gulf of Mexico. FEMA and EPA coordinated activities at the regional and headquarters levels as envisioned in a Memorandum of Understanding between the two agencies. On May 21 thru 23, 2001, the BTNEP hosted a Gulf of Mexico regional workshop in Thibodaux, LA. The workshop focused on how decision makers can integrate FEMA programs into the National Estuary Program. By understanding each other's goals, objectives, and programs, workshop participants can now effectively communicate to avoid or reduce future conflict and overlap of programs and activities, build upon each other's expertise, and combine resources for the development and implementation of comprehensive and cost-effective projects and initiatives.

Significant Achievements:

- Introduction of FEMA programs into the NEP process

- Establishment of new informational networks
- Hosting by FEMA of two NEP workshops this summer on the Atlantic and Pacific coasts
- Conducting by FEMA of two pilot workshops with selected NRCS states by September 2002

Team Members: **Federal Emergency Management Agency**; Environmental Protection Agency - National Estuary Program; Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program; Gulf of Mexico Program; Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Foundation; seven National Estuary Programs – Coastal Bend Bays and Estuaries (TX), Barataria-Terrebonne (LA), Tampa Bay Estuary (FL), Sarasota Bay Project (FL), Charlotte Harbor Estuary Program (FL), and the Indian River Lagoon (FL)

- **Queen Isabella Causeway React & Reconstruction Team, South Padre Is / Port Isabel, TX**

This partnership focused on the quick restoration of access to South Padre Island following a collision by a tugboat that collapsed two spans of the Queen Isabella Island Causeway, all the while trying to protect a sensitive aquatic area. The Queen Isabella Causeway, a two and one-half mile bridge, is the only link connecting the resort area of South Padre Island to the mainland at Port Isabel, Texas. Teamwork allowed the bridge repair work to begin immediately and the construction of needed ferry landings, addressing the needs of island residents and businesses, while ensuring protection of the environment. One of the main environmental concerns in building the temporary ferry landings was harming any of the five endangered sea grasses native to the Laguna Madre. It was also necessary to blast the submerged rubble during the demolition phase. An endangered sea turtle lives in the Laguna Madre and there is also a large population of dolphins.

Significant Achievements:

- Completion of ferry landings without harm to the sea grass
- Spotting for shallow swimming turtles and dolphins to ensure that no loss of these species occurred during explosions
- Gathering of fish killed by the concussions from the explosions, rather than letting rotting fish pollute the bay
- Donation of fish to an orphanage for food

Team Members: **TX Department of Transportation**; William Brothers Construction Company, Inc.; US Army Corps of Engineers; US Fish and Wildlife Service

- **West Galveston Bay Mooring Facility Beneficial Use Team, Galveston Bay, TX**

This project capitalized on an opportunity to use 250,000 cubic yards of dredged materials from the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway in a beneficial manner. It provided both navigational and environmental benefits and preserved future storage space for dredged material in the authorized disposal location. The project consisted of two phases. In Phase I, a geotube perimeter was created from existing emergent land out into West Galveston Bay. The subsequent space was filled with dredged material from the waterway. Following settling, Phase II began, and is scheduled to be completed in May of this year. Approximately 14 acres of land will be planted with *Spartina alterniflora* to create new tidal marsh and to stabilize the dredged material.

Significant Achievements:

- Providing of erosion protection to existing emergent land that provides wind and wave relief to a major mooring facility of the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway
- Creation of 43 acres of new tidal marsh and emergent land

Team Members: **US Army Corps of Engineers**; TX Department of Transportation; National Marine Fisheries Service; US Fish and Wildlife Service; Texas General Land Office; Texas Coastal Coordination Council; King Fisher Marine Service, Inc.; TX Parks and Wildlife Department; County of Brazoria

SWRIT

- **Delta In-Channel Islands Workgroup, Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, CA**

The project=s purpose is construction of a three-island demonstration project that will foster protection, and if possible, restoration of eroding and disappearing delta in-channel islands in a four-county area of central California. These islands provide habitat for salmon, delta smelt, native delta plants, songbirds and protected reptiles.

Significant Achievements:

- Achieving consensus on allowable approaches to protect and restore native tidal marsh (something that did not exist in 1995)
- Protection of 6.24 acres on three different islands with 2,159 lineal feet of biotechnical measures
- Planned post-project monitoring and evaluation to provide results to others to utilize in ecosystem restoration efforts

Team Members: **Delta Protection Commission**; CA Department of Water Resources; CA Department of Fish and Game; CA State Lands Commission; San Francisco Estuary Project; Sonoma State University; Noble Yacht Group; US Fish and Wildlife Service

AKRIT

- **Alaska Coastal Management Program/Coastal America Partnership Agreement (2001 resubmission)**

The Partnership Agreement between the Alaska Coastal Management Program and the Coastal America Program provides a framework to bring resources together so they can be used on projects of mutual interest and benefit. With the longest coastline and the smallest population of any state in the United States, finding new ways to combine funding and other resources is key to maximizing our coastal management efforts.

Significant Achievements:

- Participation of AK Coastal Management Program in the Alaska SeaLife Center's 2002 Student Ocean Conference

Team Members: **AK Division of Governmental Coordination**; National Marine Fisheries Service; US Army Corps of Engineers; US Fish and Wildlife Service; Environmental Protection Agency

NWRIT

None submitted or eligible for resubmission.

UM/GLRIT

None submitted or eligible for resubmission.

PIRIT

None submitted or eligible for resubmission.